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THE GARDEN CALENDAR

A radio discussion by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC radio stations, Monday, August 10, 1936.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

ANNOUNCER:

Last week in our garden calendar period we gave you a report on a new method of making Sauer Rüben from turnips and Mr. Beattie advised the planting of plenty of turnips for fall and winter use. Today, Mr. Beattie in his garden calendar is calling attention to the importance of providing means of storing fruits and vegetables for winter use.

BEATTIE:

Hello folks. It may seem rather strange that on this the 10th day of August, right in the middle of the summer, that I should be talking about storing fruits and vegetables for winter use, but you know how we put things off until the last minute and if you don't start in time to get a place ready to store your fruits and vegetables you may be caught napping when Jack Frost pays you a visit next fall. Nowadays when we think of storage we naturally think of cold-storage with great storage rooms with heavy insulated doors that close with a dull thud, and in the storage room great coils of frost-covered cooling pipes that keep the temperature down near the freezing point. In case you have fine apples to store next fall it may pay you to store them in a commercial cold-storage plant but today I am suggesting methods of storing a great many products of your gardens and orchards right at home, perhaps in a special room in your cellar or in an outdoor cellar like a storm cellar.

Before I go into a brief discussion of storage houses let me suggest that while temperature and moisture control are the main factors in the successful storage of fruits and vegetables, a great deal depends upon having good, sound products that are free from diseases if you want to be successful in their storage. That means that you must grow good products and handle them carefully in order that they may store safely. You folks who live in the South know how the sweetpotato industry has been practically revolutionized by the adoption of the heat-curing method and the use of special sweetpotato houses in which the potatoes are properly cured and stored. You can build a small sweetpotato storage for about the amount you can save in two years and after that the house will show a clear profit.

In the northern sections where apples, potatoes and the various root crops are to be stored, the temperature requirements may be very largely met by providing plenty of ventilation in the storage cellar or special room. By the use of rockwool, the insulating material now so extensively used for the insulation of houses, you can build an insulated storage at very moderate cost but the main point is to provide plenty of ventilation so that cool air can be brought in at night and the warm air allowed to escape. We have a Farmers' Bulletin No. 879 on the home storage of

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vegetables that contains numerous plans for storage rooms and houses. This bulletin was written before the use of insulating material became so popular but the only difference is that you would use the insulation in the walls and partitions.

With improved methods of insulation the storage room can be fitted up right in a basement or cellar where there is a furnace. In that case the storage room should be placed as far as possible from the furnace and provided with plenty of windows or openings for ventilation. Sometimes a little heat is needed to keep out frost.

Certain of our vegetables like carrots, turnips and cabbage can be kept to best advantage if buried in outdoor pits. These products are kind of smelly when stored in the cellar besides the average cellar is too warm and too dry for them. I have known cases where a large box or a very large barrel was simply buried in the ground and then three or four different kinds of vegetables stored in it. Usually the box or barrel is turned on its side and then buried in the side of a hill or a bank so that it will be easy to get to during the winter. The exposed end can be boarded up and protected with straw or by setting bundles of corn fodder over it. This type of storage costs very little and is really quite effective. The next step is a brick, stone or concrete block storage built into the side of a hill or high bank.

No matter what type of storage you adopt where you use the natural or outdoor air to cool the storage you want ventilators. One way to ventilate an outdoor pit or cellar is to have four or five tiles leading into the bottom of the storage and another set of tiles or pipes in the roof to carry out the warm air as the cold air comes in below. In house cellars this can be handled by means of a window one-half of which opens directly into the cellar near the ceiling and the other half fitted with a box that is carried down to a point near the floor. The cold air will flow in through the box while the warm air will pass out of the window at the top.

These are simple ways of providing storage for fruits and vegetables at home and if any of you want additional information just drop me a postcard, but be sure you write your name and address very plainly for as I have told you before we often have trouble reading the names and addresses, especially on post cards.

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